(No. XXI.)

THE PASTIME.

SCHENECTADY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1807.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For the Pastime.

THE position, that "nature has made all minds the same," admits of nice disquisition; but that education, habit or accident, diversifies the natural character, and varies its coloring, is a point generally yielded. For though in disputing on the questions of liberty and free agency, some have argued, that man is irresistibly what we behold him, that, though he has apparent liberty, yet he is forcibly compelled always to act as he does, and be as he is, nevertheless, the doctrine seems not to have gained much ground, and we generally agree in the belief, that we have some control over our minds, and may improve or neglect them, according to our choice. It is hard, to be sure, to disprove the opposite position. If, for instance, I debate with myself, whether to be a priest, a lawyer, a doctor, or a mere Jew, and hit upon the last *profession*, as being the most lucrative of any of them, an opponent to the doctrine of free agency will say I could have been nothing else, and I can never disprove his assertion—for I never can stand again in my former position for a trial of the question. Let the question go—it is not material, and is fit only for idle speculation. It is sufficient, that we are assured, if Heaven gives to man soundness of mind and health of body, he may make himself wise, generous and great, or decay into the opposite character, as he chooses to make exertion. There seems to be a necessity for man to struggle in opposition to circumstances, from the moment he has discretion, till he, with his faculties, sleeps in the dust. There is required one unceasing contest between sense and intellect, between passion and reason—as if life was a running current, which man has to stem—he labors with pain, and if he rests on his oar, is hurried to destruction—unless ever on his guard—his first principles are effaced by succeeding impressions, and he takes character according to circumstance, as wax is marked by objects with which it is pressed. He must repel, avoid, retreat, defend—then, and then only, he retains the purity of his nature. Such are the reflections which naturally arise in the bosom, from a view of the various characters which compose society. So opposite, so different in value are they, making up such an endless variety, a "many coloured banner waving" triumphantly, and, at every change of the breeze, exhibiting to view novel hues of human nature. How vast the distance between the highest degree of good and lowest degree of bad! How mul-

tiplied the number that fills that distance ! How nice the grades —how artful the mixture of light and shade to make one perfect picture. Let us examine, to see if nature is the author of the darker part. The inhuman assassin—the deliberate knave—the base destroyer of confidence and love—the ungrateful villain, who returns evil for good—the wary trapsetting usurer—the wretch, who disgraces the honorable profession of the law, by forfeiting every principle of a man—the murderer of reputation —Holy nature ! what monsters would they make thee guilty of forming, who ascribe to thee characters, which weak and foolish, depraved and wicked man, has created for himself. Pure as the dew drop which glistens in the beam of morning are thy works ! And the green clad hills and vallies of the earth—the cerulean sea—the sporting breezes of summer, which dance on its surface—the cheering beauty of mid-day—and the gay spangled firmaments of silver night—all, all, bespeak the neatness of thy works—and more than those—his tranquil bosom where innocence and virtue are enthroned. Nature has endowed us with reason and fancy, and we are true and faithful to her, as we direct and govern them. He, who sits in yonder dark and dirty hovel—through whose unstopped crevices the keen blast whistles hoarse and dreary—who counts his ill earned money, with such eager joy, was once a gay and sporting innocent, on whose fair mind might have been written every virtue—whose reason, if directed right, had made him great and noble—nature bade him glory in deeds of beneficence—his eye, diluted with pleasure at a generous act, and his soul expanded with delight for conscious goodness. But the illusive charms of wealth led him astray—he wove his affections around that single object—placed there his hopes—and credulous fancy listened with joy to the errors of reason. Hence he counts his gold with such a meagre glare of happiness—his whole faculties absorbed by that single object money—he tramples down principle, affection and his own true interest, and sits, as he does, enthroned on the ruins of others, smiling ghastly, with a savage triumph, on the glitter of his wealth. He is a " wary, trapsetting usurer"—and, though " Heaven made him for a man, and he passed for one," he has not an idea that unites him to the chain of humanity. Why he is a usurer—a mere usurer—and never thinks he is a man. Some, among our most respected casuists, have said, with sorrowful expression, that it must be confessed, a strict adherence to the principles of virtue will not always be our highest worldly interest, and, setting futurity aside, that there are cases, in which a yielding honesty is the best policy. This is to the slight observer, a light and trivial admission, and would be, by him, passed over unnoticed ; but he, who views the extent of danger to which it may lead, will startle with a mixture of horror

and indignation, at the slightest sanction given to such a sentiment. From this idea has originated another character in society—the deliberate cheating knave—He is of a temperate old age—the glow of good health tinges his cheek—the mildness of benevolence gives a gentle lustre to his eyes—and the hoary head of the man bears about it the venerable stamp of time. He wears his spectacles with such an air of honesty, and enters into all the little stories of our grief with such a good natured sympathy, that he would irresistibly obtain your confidence, full faith and warmest love—if you did not know him to be a villain. His tricks and quirks have put him into a good fortune—but it is whispered about, the fellow is not what he appears—it is not indeed positively known by the proofs that a court of justice would require, but every body believes it. He was once thought to be a man—but he is no such a thing—time has changed his nature—he has been born again—and is now a mere knave. It is by some such error in reason or judgment, that the base betrayer of confidence, the ungrateful wretch who returns you evil for good, the inhuman assassin, the murderer of reputation, and every vile character which disturbs the honest peace of society, have thrown off the form of nature's children, and become the children of a narrow art. In reality, I think there are but few true men, in the great multitude of beings, who call themselves such. See what I think a man is, and judge—if society abounds with the kind. I think I see him sensible that he is but a human being—therefore humble, yet possessed of a mind that rises above the passions, prejudices and interests which govern the greater part of society—fixed in the belief, that for his virtue he shall be rewarded—and that could he commit a crime he would assuredly be punished—ready to sacrifice his own interest to the happiness of others, in the firm persuasion, that the happiness of others will make his own—unseduced by vulgar hopes—unawed by common fears—meeting with firmness every evil however great and terrible that falls on himself—feeling real sorrow for every calamity however small, that befals another—benevolent, affectionate, just, penetrating enough to distinguish the impositions of folly and vice, and possessing the charity that forgives them all—wisely judging of remotest effects—thereby distinguishing, with accuracy, between right and wrong—active in the performance of duty—intrepid, prompt, disinterested—placing his mind on an eminence, from whence he looks with an impartial eye throughout the universe, and suffering no incidents in life to bring her from her height. Such I call men, and there are not many such.

MISCELLANY.

In the county of Ulster, in the neighborhood of Pennsylvania, says an American planter, in his Letters on Cultivation, lived a

man whose name was Le Fevre; he was the grandson of a Frenchman, who was obliged to fly his country at the revocation of the edict of Nantz. He might well have been called the *last* of mankind, for he possessed a plantation on the very verge of the valley towards the Blue Mountains, a place of refuge for animals of the deer kind.

This man, having a family of eleven children, was greatly alarmed one morning at missing the youngest, who was about four years of age; he disappeared about ten o'clock. The distressed family sought after him in the river, and in the fields, but to no purpose. Terrified to an extreme degree, they united with their neighbors in quest of him. They entered the woods, which they beat over with the most scrupulous attention. A thousand times they called him by name, and were answered only by the echoes of the wilds. They then assembled themselves at the foot of the Mountain of Chatagniers, or chesnut-trees, without being able to bring the least intelligence of the child. After reposing themselves for some minutes, they formed into different bands—and night coming on, the parents in despair refused to return home; for their terror was constantly increased by the knowledge they had of the mountain cats, animals so rapacious, that the inhabitants cannot always defend themselves against their attack. Then they painted to their imagination the horrid idea of a wolf, or some other dreadful animal, devouring their darling child. "Derick, my poor little Derick! where are you?" frequently exclaimed the mother, in the most poignant language; but all was of no avail. As soon as the day-light appeared, they renewed their search, but as unsuccessfully as the preceding day. Fortunately, however, an Indian, laden with furs, coming from an adjacent village, called at the house of Le Fevre, intending to repose himself there, as he usually did, on travelling through that part of the country. He was much surprised to find no one at home, but an old negress, kept there by her infirmities. "Where is my brother?" said the Indian. "Alas!" replied the negro woman, "he has lost his little Derick, and all the neighbors are employed in looking after him in the woods." It was then three o'clock in the afternoon: "Sound the horn," said the Indian, "and try and call thy master home; I will find his child." The horn was sounded; and as soon as the father returned, the Indian asked him for the shoes and stockings that little Derick had worn last. He then ordered his dog, which he brought with him, to smell them; and then, taking the house for his centre, he described a circle of a quarter of a mile, semi-diameter; ordering his dog to smell the earth wherever he led him. The circle was not completed, when the sagacious animal began to bark. This sound brought some feeble ray of hope to the disconsolate parents. The dog followed the scent, and barked

again ; the party pursued him with all their speed, but soon lost sight of him in the woods. Half an hour afterwards, they heard him again, and soon saw him return. The countenance of the poor animal was visibly altered ; an air of joy seemed to animate him and his gestures indicated that his search had not been in vain. " I am sure he has found the child!" exclaimed the Indian. But whether dead or alive was at present the cruel subject of doubt. The Indian then followed his dog, who led him to the foot of a large tree, where lay the child in an enfeebled state, nearly approaching death. He took it tenderly in his arms, and hastily carried it to the disconsolate parents.

Happily, the father and mother were in some measure prepared to receive their child, but their joy was so great, that it was more than a quarter of an hour before they could express their gratitude to the kind restorer of him. Words cannot express the affecting scene. After they had bathed the face of the child with their tears, they threw themselves on the neck of the Indian, whose heart melted in unison with theirs. Their gratitude was then extended to the dog ; they caressed him with inexpressible delight, as the animal, by means of whose sagacity, they had found their beloved offspring ; and conceiving that, like the rest of the group, he must now stand in need of refreshment, a plentiful repast was prepared for him, after which he and his master pursued their journey ; and the company, mutually pleased at the happy event, returned to their respective habitations, highly delighted with the kind Indian, and his wonderful dog. — *Natur. Cab.*

ROBERT KER PORTER.

Respecting this celebrated artist, who painted the Panorama of the "*Battle of Lodi*," lately exhibited in this country, we find the following paragraph in a recent English paper :

" Mr. Ker Porter, whose conspicuous talents as an artist have been so justly admired in this country, went to Russia some time ago, where he was received with great attention. He was particularly honored by the kindness of the Emperor Alexander. But he has been still more fortunate, for, on paying a visit to Moscow, where he remained some time, he captivated the heart of the Princess Shebatoff, a lady of considerable rank and fortune. The family do not object to the union, which has most probably by this time taken place, with the sanction of the Emperor. Our fortunate young countryman is a man of considerable abilities, which are not confined within his trade. He is, besides, remarkable for manly spirit, good humor, and an exemplary observance of the duties and affections of a son and

brother. The Princess is entirely independent of her family, has three palaces, besides extensive territorial property, and is very pleasing in person and amiable in character."

LITERARY NOTICE.

GENIUS AND POETRY.

The admirers of great talents, elegantly and usefully displayed, will learn with infinite pleasure, that the author of "The Ruling Passion" is collecting and will publish to the world a volume of his poetry. Wherever the American character is known, the poetry of PAINE has delighted the ear by the harmony of its music, elevated the feelings by the eloquence of its patriotism, and been fixed in the memory by the display of bold invention, and original thought. At a time when the whole continent was emulous of distinction for the combination of patriotic sentiment with poetic inspiration, the writings of Robert Treat Paine, jun. Esq. were hailed with wonder and admiration, and his verses, like those of Homer, recited by every tongue. It is indeed to be regretted that genius so original and commanding should so frequently have been expended on local topics and the politics of the day; but there is so much of that ethereal fire of genius in the compositions of this writer, that it imparts its own immortality to every subject it pursues, without suffering the contamination that inferior talents would receive from the humble connexions.

The volume which is now announced to the public will contain not merely those popular songs, which, like the national airs of the Swiss, have electrified the whole continent with the fire of patriotism, but likewise those occasional effusions of erudition and taste which have delighted the admirers of genius, by elegant sentiment, flowing imagery, bold personification, and whatever splendid ornament has at any time shone in the coronet of the Muses.

In addition to the productions which are known and admired, the present volume will contain several interesting occasional poems, that have hitherto feasted only the private eye of friendship and charmed the social circle of literature and taste. It gratifies us to add, that the whole work, revised and corrected by its celebrated author, will be published at the Emerald press, with the advantage of his personal superintendance. [*Emerald.*]

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For the Pastime.

IF reason could the heart control,
If mem'ry from itself could fly,
I'd quench the fire that burns my soul,
Nor drink the poison from her eye!

Selected Poetry.

How often have I vainly sought
To guard against love's mad'ning sway,
But flashing deep into my heart,
One glance has swept resolve away!

Then since no reason can assuage
Presumptuous reveries like mine,
Rage on, my soul, still madly rage,
And be a fancied *Mary* thine!

Long may the fairy vision spread
Its soothing spell around my mind;
That joy itself forever fled,
May leave the phantom still behind.

And when at length this life shall fade,
And earthly scenes shall sink in gloom,
My *Mary's* fondly cherish'd shade,
Shall light my passage to the tomb!

The subject of this excellent old song is a comparison between the manners of the old gentry, as still subsisting in the times of Elizabeth, and the modern refinements affected by their sons, in the reigns of her successors.

THE OLD AND YOUNG COURTIER.

An old song made by an aged old pate,
Of an old worshipful gentleman, who had a great estate;
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate;
Like an old courtier of the queen's,
And the queen's old courtier.

With an old lady, whose anger one word asswages,
They every quarter paid their old servants their wages,
And never knew what belong'd to coachmen, footmen, nor pages,
But kept twenty old fellows with blue coats and badges;
Like an old courtier, &c.

With an old study fill'd full of learned old books,
With an old reverend chaplain, you might know him by his looks,
With an old buttery hatch worn quite off the hooks,
And an old kitchen that maintain'd half a dozen old cooks;
Like an old courtier, &c.

With an old hall, hung about with pikes, guns, and bows,
With old swords, and bucklers, they had borne many shrewde blows,
And an old frize coat, to cover his worship's trunk hose,
And a cup of old sherry to comfort his copper nose;
Like an old courtier, &c.

With a good old fashion, when Christmasse was come,
To call in all his old neighbours with bagpipe and drum,
With good cheer enough to furnish every old room,
And old liquor able to make a cat speak, and man dumb;
Like an old courtier, &c.

With an old falconer, huntsman, and a kennel of hounds,
That never hawked, nor hunted, but in his own grounds,

To Readers and Correspondents.

Who, like a wise man, kept himself within his own bounds,
And when he dyed, gave every child a thousand good pounds;
Like an old courtier, &c.

But to his eldest son his house and land he assign'd,
Charging him in his will to keep the old bountiful mind,
To be good to his old tenants, and to his neighbours be kind:
But in the ensuing ditty you shall hear how he was inclin'd;
Like a young courtier of the king's,
And the king's young courtier.

Like a flourishing young gallant, newly come to his land,
Who keeps a brace of painted madams at his command,
And takes up a thousand pounds upon his father's land,
And gets drunk in a tavern, till he can neither go nor stand;
Like a young courtier, &c.

With a new fangled lady, that is dainty, nice, and spare,
Who never knew what belonged to good housekeeping or care;
Who buys gaudy-colour'd fans to play with wanton air,
And seven or eight different dressings of other women's hair;
Like a young courtier, &c.

With a new-fashion'd hall, built where the old one stood,
Hung round with new pictures that do the poor no good,
With a fine marble chimney, wherein burns neither coal nor wood;
And a new smooth shovelboard, whereon no victuals e'er stood;
Like a young courtier, &c.

With a new study, stuft full of pamphlets and plays,
And a new chaplain, that swears faster than he prays;
With a new buttery hatch that opens once in four or five days,
And a new French cook, to devise fine kickshaws and toys;
Like a young courtier, &c.

With a new fashion, when Christmas is drawing on,
On a new journey to London, straight we all must be gone,
And leave none to keep house, but our new porter John,
Who relieves the poor with a thump on the back with a stone;
Like a young courtier, &c.

With a new gentleman-usher, whose carriage is complete,
With a new coachman, footmen, and pages to carry up the meat;
With a waiting gentlewoman, whose dress is very neat.
Who, when her lady has din'd, lets the servants not eat;
Like a young courtier, &c:

With new titles of honor bought with his father's old gold,
For which sundry of his ancestors' old manors are sold;
And this is the course most of our new gallants hold,
Which makes that good house-keeping is now grown so cold
Among the young courtiers of the king,
Or the king's young courtiers.

To READERS and CORRESPONDENTS.

The letter of Cowper, promised in No. XIX, is mislaid. The Editor has written to New-York for a duplicate, and hopes to supply the loss in a very few days. Many original articles are in preparation.

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